

The nomination may fall to him only as a compromise candidate

south Texas to hold hearings.

The battle then raged into the higher Federal courts. On September 27, U. S. Supreme Court Justice Hugo Black reversed Judge Davidson's ruling, and Johnson's name went on the ballot just before the October 3 deadline. Justice Black stated, "It is impossible to believe that a Federal court could go into a state and suspend the orderly processes of an election." The *Dallas News* reported: "Black wondered why Stevenson went to a Federal court when he had the choice of a state court." Black's ruling was sustained by the full Supreme Court on October 4.

In the general election, Johnson won overwhelmingly over his Republican opponent, and he was seated by the Senate after a further inquiry in Texas by investigators of the Senate Rules Committee. (The investigators were sent out when the Republicans controlled the Senate, but shortly thereafter, the Democrats regained control as a result of the 1948 elections, and nothing more was heard of the investigation.) According to Allen Duckworth, political editor of the *Dallas News*, the case probably was never taken into the state courts because this would have led to a

state-wide recount, and, as Duckworth puts it, "there were also many signs of skulduggery at the local level in other places, like Brown County, where Stevenson won handily."

There is no evidence that Johnson had anything to do with the admittedly peculiar goings-on in Jim Wells County—where, incidentally, the local political bosses had quarreled violently with Stevenson over the matter of dispensing patronage. Johnson did, however, sign a petition for a court injunction that stopped ex-FBI man Dibrell and others from eliminating any of Johnson's votes, on the ground that they had no legal authority to do so. Since that time, his enemies have labeled him "The Senator from the 13th Precinct"—and this could come up again in 1960.

In the face of these obstacles, what kind of race would Johnson make? He has many qualities that seem to be necessary for a candidate in this television age: great charm and wit, tremendous masculine appeal to the female voter, an attractive wife and two lovely daughters, Lynda Bird, 15, and Lucy Baines, 11.

He has the support of leaders of all segments of the Democratic party,

including the other Presidential candidates. Sen. Stuart Symington of Missouri told me, "Lyndon would make a fine President. He understands government, and that's not the most prevalent trait around Washington today." Sen. John F. Kennedy of Massachusetts told me, "Lyndon has personality, vitality, tireless energy. His weaknesses are that he fluctuates and is not a heavyweight thinker. But, like Franklin D. Roosevelt, he has the faculty of attracting brilliant people to work for him, and this would offset his weaknesses. He's tough, but I'd rather have him as President than some bland character. At least he'd get things done."

Says Senator Monroney, one of the leaders of the Western liberal bloc, "Lyndon is a compromiser, true, and I don't like compromisers ordinarily. I like people who fight things out. But a leader must have this quality. Lyndon does terrific mental homework, and he has a memory like an electronic computer. Old-timers in the Senate say they have never seen his kind of leadership. He operates out of his hat. That kind of President would be a welcome change for the country."

Contrasted to these appraisals are

many less enthusiastic ones. For example, a liberal opponent in Texas, a lawyer named Creekmore Fath, directly contradicts Senator Monroney's evaluation. He says, "It would be a disaster if Johnson were elected. He'd be another Warren G. Harding. He likes to wheel and deal in the back room. The great Presidents raise hell and openly fight for what they believe in." A conservative ex-governor of Texas, Dan Moody, told me, "I have no respect for the man. He's only out to feather his own nest."

Public-opinion polls say Kennedy is now the likeliest candidate to be named at the Democratic convention of July, 1960. But if there is a deadlock, the convention probably will turn to Adlai E. Stevenson, Symington or Johnson, as a compromise candidate.

When the smoke clears, Johnson may be the first Democratic nominee in years from south of the Mason-Dixon Line. The odds against this are still great, but with no one except Johnson could such a phenomenon even be considered a possibility. As his old friend, the Negro leader Mrs. Mary McLeod Bethune, used to say, "What Mr. Johnson can't do, can't be done."

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